

From: Stan Barnes
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 1/24/02 8:38am
Subject: Microsoft Settlement

To whom it may concern,

I must express my doubts about the proposed settlement between Microsoft and the US Department of Justice. Microsoft has for years used a policy of copy and destroy, taking other companies ideas and then propagating their own inferior knockoff through the use of the wide deployment of their operating system. Initially, they are compliant with existing standards, but eventually (and always) come out with their own proprietary "improvement" which then kills competition. In the settlement, they are allowed to decide who they share such proprietary "improvements" with and this is insatisfactory.

The settlement leaves too much power in the hands of Microsoft, and they have shown themselves to be merciless in the welding of such power. To allow an unapologetic monopoly to continue in its actions, largely unchecked, is harmful to the consumers. Because Microsoft does not truly have to compete, they are relaxed in things which should be a priority, the strongest example of which is security. Microsofts security attitude has resulted in billions of dollars of damages because of exploitable holes in products such as internet explorer and outlook express. In part it is the homogeny of the system which makes such holes especially dangerous. And it is their power as a monopoly which prevents the diversification necessary for growth. They are the potato crop of Ireland and we are now headed for the plague. How many will starve? Only measures allowing true competition and therefore diversification can allow prosperity. It is the government's job to serve the people, and allowing microsoft to continue unchecked, or barely checked as this settlement would do, is an inadequate service.

Thank you for your time

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